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by J D Harding

COBHAM HALL

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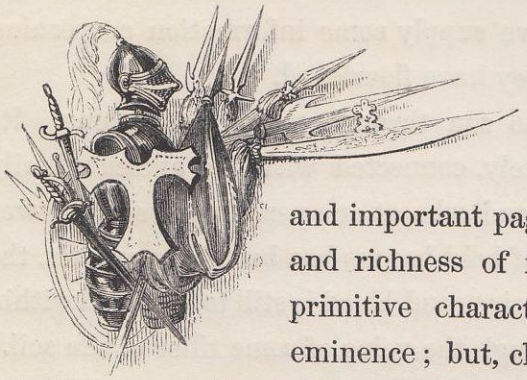
KENT.



THE COUNTY OF KENT holds foremost rank among the Shires of England; not alone because of its picturesque beauty, its great fertility, the full and important page it occupies in British history, the abundance and richness of its antiquities, the peculiarities of its laws, the primitive character of its customs, or its ecclesiastical pre-eminence; but, chiefly, because it is regarded as our great Island bulwark—our "Vanguard of liberty,"—

> "A soil that doth advance
> A haughty brow against the coast of France."

Very few of our counties contain so many perfect examples of structures such as it is our purpose to depict. The BARONIAL HALLS of Kent, and the ANCIENT CHURCHES of Kent, are among the most remarkable, picturesque, and unimpaired EDIFICES of the kingdom. With Kent, therefore, we commence our Work; and although it will be, necessarily, discursive, we may draw from the vast store of wealth with which the fair County supplies us, ample to excite and interest the reader at the outset of our undertaking. Its proximity to the Metropolis—from which, if we measure distances by time, it is separated by little more than two hours—supplies a sufficient motive for the selection of COBHAM HALL, and the several striking objects in its immediate vicinity. It is situated about four miles south-east of Gravesend, nearly midway between that town and Rochester; but a mile or so out of the direct road. The narrow coach-paths which lead to it are shaded by pleasant hedge-rows, and run between lines of hop-gardens—our English vineyards, infinitely more graceful and beautiful accessories to the landscape than the stunted grape-shrubberies of France.

The mansion stands in the midst of scenery of surpassing loveliness; alternating hill and valley, rich in "patrician trees" and "plebeian underwood;" dotted with pretty

cottages, and interspersed with primitive villages; while, here and there, are scattered "old houses" of red brick, with their carved wooden gables and tall twisted chimneys; and glimpses are caught, occasionally, of the all-glorious Thames.

A visit to Cobham Hall, therefore, furnishes a most refreshing and invigorating luxury to dwellers in the Metropolis; and the liberality of its noble owner adds to the rich banquet of Nature as rare a treat as can be supplied by Art; the Hall,—independent of the interest it derives from its quaint architecture—its fine, although not unmixed, remains of the Tudor style—contains a gallery of pictures, by the best masters of the most famous schools, large in number and of rare value*.

Before we commence our description of the Hall, the Demesne, the Church, the College, and the village of Cobham†, it is necessary that we supply some information concerning the several families, under whose guardianship they have flourished.

Cobham Hall has not descended from sire to son through many generations. Its present lord is in no way, or at least very remotely, connected with the ancient family who for centuries governed the "men of Kent;" and, who at one period, possessed power second only to that of the sovereign. That race of bold barons has been long extinct, the last of them dying in miserable poverty; and if their proud blood is still to be found within their once princely barony, it runs, probably, through the veins of some tiller of the soil.

The Cobhams had been famous from the earliest recorded times. In Philipott's "Survey of Kent"—1659—it is said that "Cobham afforded a seat and a surname to that noble and splendid family; and certainly," adds the quaint old writer, "this place was the cradle or seminary of persons who, in elder ages, were invested in places of as signall and principall a trust or eminence, as they could move in, in the narrow orbe of a particular county." Henry de Cobham was one of the Recognitores magnæ assisæ—who were "in some proportion equivalent to the judges itinerant"—in the first year of King John. No less than four Kentish gentlemen of the name embarked with the first Edward in his "victorious and triumphant expedition into Scotland," and were knighted for services rendered to that Prince in his "successful and auspicious siege of

* The Hall is opened to the public generally, only on Friday (between the hours of eleven and four) the day on which Hampton Court is closed. Visitors are admissible by cards, which must be obtained previously from Mr. Caddel, library, Gravesend, or Mr. Wildash, bookseller, Rochester. A charge is made of one hilling to each person. The sum thus accruing is appropriated to the benefit of the schools and other charitable institutions in the neighbourhood. The visitor is thus relieved from the irksome necessity of considering what gratuity he is to bestow upon the guide who accompanies him through the several galleries; servants "being strictly forbidden to take any fees." The cards contain the "Regulations." Those who can devote but one day to an examination of this locality will do well to commence by an inspection of the church and village, and wander about the park after the Hall has been seen. Those who are not content with so comparatively brief a scrutiny, will find a homely but neat and comfortable inn at Cobham. It is scarcely necessary to observe that steam-boats ply, in summer, from Blackwall—distant six miles, or ten minutes, from the heart of London—every half hour. These voyages commence very early, and are continued to a late hour; so that although the Hall is five or six and twenty miles from the metropolis, it will not be found difficult to visit it and return to the city within one day.

† "Cobeham anciently Coptham,—that is the head or village, from the Saxon Copt, an head."—*Philipott. Survey of Kent.*

Carlaverock." With John de Cobham, distinguished in the reign of Edward the Third, the male line determined; Joan, his daughter, is said to have had five husbands, by only one of whom *, Sir Reginald Braybrooke, she left issue, Joan, who being married to Sir Thomas Broke, of the county of Somerset, Esq., "knitt Cobham, and a large income beside, to her husband's patrimony.†" Their eldest son, Sir Edward Broke, was summoned to Parliament, as Baron Cobham, in the 23 Henry VI. In 1559, Sir William Broke entertained Queen Elizabeth at Cobham Hall, in the first year of her reign, "with a noble welcome as she took her progress through the county of Kent." His son and successor, Henry Lord Cobham, was Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports; but "being too deeply concerned in the design of Sir Walter Raleigh," he was deprived of his estates, "though not his life.‡" His younger brother, George, was executed; but Lord Cobham "lived many years after in great misery and poverty," dying in January 1619; and sharing the humble grave of some lowly peasant, apart from the magnificent tombs which cover the remains of his great and gallant ancestors. He is said, by Weldon, to have been reduced to such extreme necessity, that "he had starved, but for a trencher-scraper, sometime his servant at Court, who relieved him with scraps." His estates, at the

* One of the husbands of this lady was Sir John Oldcastle, who, in the reign of Henry V., attached himself to the Lollards. He was cited to appear before the Archbishop of Canterbury, and sentenced to death as "a heretic; who together with others, to the number of twenty men, called Lollards, had conspired to subvert the clergy and kill the king." Having been outlawed upon treason and excommunicated, he was removed from the Tower to the "New Gallows" in St. Giles', where he underwent his sentence—"to be hanged, and burned hanging." At the place of execution, it is said, he desired Sir Thomas Erpingham, "in case he saw him risen the third day after, that he would then be a means to procure favour to the rest of his sect." His "Tryal" before the Archbishop of Canterbury, 1 Henry Fifth, A. D. 1413, "on the Saturday after the feast of St. Matthew," in the Chapter House of St. Paul, is reported in the State Trials. It is curious to note the language in which the prelate is stated to have addressed the doomed recusant:—"We repeated in soft and moderate terms, and in a manner very courteous and obliging, all our proceedings against him." "We replied with much patience, and in a courteous and affectionate manner." "We besought him, with tears in our eyes, and exhorted him in the most compassionate manner." Such, and similar phrases, record the "gentleness" with which he was doomed to a cruel death. The archbishop could "make nothing" of the brave Lollard. He openly avowed that the only honour he vouchsafed to the Image of the Cross was, to "keep it clean, and in his closet;" declared his belief that he was "the true successor of St. Peter, who followed him in the purity of his life and conversation;" and protested that he "desired absolution only from God." For the said "detestable crime of heresy" he was ordered to die; "by the advice and consent of men famous for discretion and wisdom;" and was "dispatched with all convenient expedition."

† Sir Thomas Broke, and Joan de Cobham, his wife, had ten sons and four daughters. It is their tomb which occupies so prominent a position in the chancel of Cobham church.

‡ At the trial of Sir Walter Raleigh, at Winton, the 17th of November, 1 Jac. 1603, for high treason, "in conspiring to depose the King and set up the Lady Arabella Stuart, and corresponding with Spain for that purpose;" a variety of documents and letters were produced and read; written, as alleged, by Lord Cobham, implicating Sir Walter, admitting his own guilty participation, and affirming that "he would not have entered into these courses but by his, Raleigh's, instigation." Raleigh's demand to be brought "face to face" with his accuser was refused, on the ground that "the accuser may be drawn by practise to retract what he had deposed, while he is here in person." To this Raleigh replied, "He dares not accuse me. He said I was the cause of all his miseries and the destruction of his house, by my wicked counsel. If this be true, whom hath he to accuse or be revenged of but me?" "I say," he added, "that Cobham is a base, dishonourable, poor soul." Cobham, however, had retracted his assertions concerning Raleigh, who, at his trial, produced a letter from Cobham, to this effect:—"Seeing myself so near my end, for the discharge of my conscience and freeing myself from your blood, which else will cry vengeance against me, I protest upon my salvation, I never practised with Spain by your procurement: God so comfort me in this my affliction, as you are a true subject for anything I know. I will say as Pilate, 'Purus sum a sanguine hujus.' So God have mercy upon my soul, as I know no treason by you." The letter, however, availed Sir Walter nothing; the attorney-general affirming "that it had been procured by subtle practises; and that the first declaration was drawn up voluntarily by my lord Cobham, and without any hopes of pardon." Under a most iniquitous sentence

time of their confiscation, are estimated to have been worth 7,000*l.* per annum; and he possessed 30,000*l.* in goods and chattels. His nephew was "restored in blood;" but not to the title or property. These were transferred—"the manor and seat of Cobham Hall, and the rest of Lord Cobham's lands"—by James the First to one of his kinsmen, Ludovick Stuart, Duke of Lennox; whose male line became extinct in 1672. The Lady Katherine, sister of the last Duke of Richmond and Lennox, married into the princely family of the O'Briens of Thomond; but the Duke "dying greatly in debt," the estates were sold. Cobham Hall was purchased by the second husband of the Lady Katherine, Sir Joseph Williamson, who resided there for some time.* In 1701 he died, bequeathing two-thirds of his property to his widow. This proportion descended, on her demise, to Edward Lord Clifton and Cornbury, afterwards Lord Clarendon, who had married the sole child of the Lady Katherine, by her first husband, Henry Lord O'Brien†; and on his death, without issue, in 1713, his sister, Lady Theodosia Hyde, inherited. She married John Bligh, of the kingdom of Ireland, Esq.‡; created, in 1721, an Irish Peer by the title of Lord Clifton of Rathmore, and, in 1725, Earl of Darnley in that kingdom. For some years the estate was in Chancery. After a tedious suit, it was purchased by Lord Darnley for the sum of £51,000, to the third part of which a Mrs. Hornsby became entitled, as relict of the gentleman to whom Sir Joseph Williamson had devised one third part.§ The present Peer, the sixth Earl of Darnley, is a minor; he was born on the 16th April, 1827, and will consequently be of age in 1848. He is hereditary High Steward of Gravesend and Milton. His father, the fifth Peer, married—in 1825—Emma Jane, third daughter of Sir Henry Parnell, Bart., created Lord Congleton in 1841. This estimable lady resides at Cobham Hall. The late Peer died in 1835, in consequence of an injury received from a woodman's axe, while he was trimming trees in a plantation adjoining his mansion. His death was the subject of universal sorrow; in his own immediate neighbourhood, it was mourned as a private and personal loss.

Such is a brief history of the several noble families through whom the mansion, demesne, and estates, of Cobham have passed.

then pronounced, Raleigh was executed fifteen years afterwards; and Cobham had been a houseless wanderer, meanwhile, perishing unpitied and unwept. Of their intimacy there is no doubt; and it is more than probable that the Old Hall we are describing was often the home of Sir Walter Raleigh, when distinguished as "the noble and valourous knight." It is grievous to think that so great a "worthy" should have been sacrificed to the pitiful cowardice of so "poor a soul" as the last of the Cobhams—the degenerate scion of a munificent and valorous race.

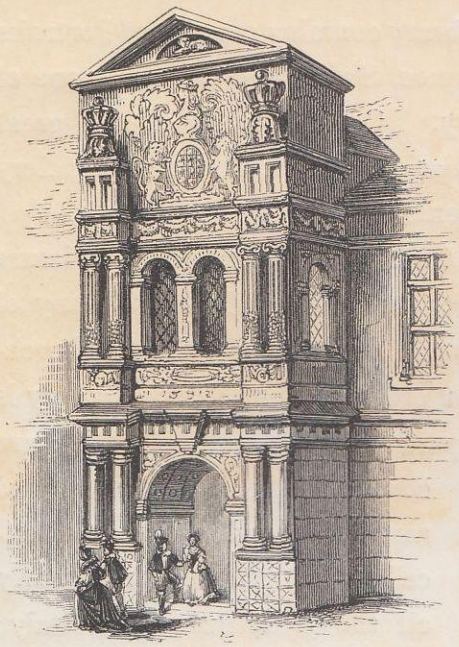
* Sir Joseph Williamson was the son of a clergyman of Cumberland. He held various appointments under the Crown; was President of the Royal Society; and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

† "Lady Katherine O'Brien died in November following; upon which her two thirds of this manor and seat, with the rest of the estates of the late Duke of Richmond, purchased by Sir Joseph Williamson, descended to Edward, Lord Clifton and Cornbury, (son of Edward, Lord Cornbury, afterwards Earl of Clarendon, and Catherine his wife, the only daughter and heir of the said Lady Katherine, by her first husband, Henry, Lord O'Brien,) and on her death without issue, in 1713, to his only surviving sister and heir, the Lady Theodosia Hyde."—*Hasted's Kent*, vol. i.

‡ The Blighs were originally a Devonshire family; and in the reign of Charles the First were seated at Rathmore, in the county of Meath, in Ireland.

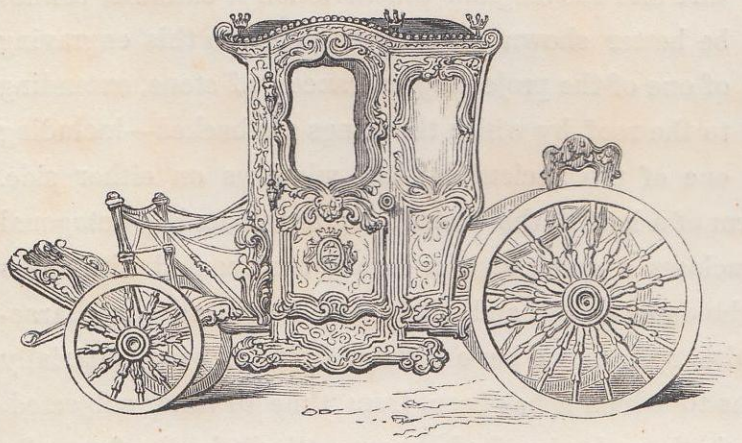
§ In 1714, 1 Geo. I., Sir Richard Temple, Bart. was created Baron Cobham—a title his descendants enjoy. The Temples were connected in the female line with the Brokes.

THE HALL is backed by a noble Park, amply stocked with deer, and containing trees, of great variety and immense size, some of them measuring above thirty feet in circumference. It comprises 1,800 acres, and encloses an area of about seven miles. The old approach, long disused, was through an Avenue of lime-trees, consisting of four rows, and extending more than half a mile in length from the dependent village. The present entrance is through a red-brick, turreted, Gateway, adjacent to which is "the Lodge." On nearing the House, the eye encounters a Cedar of magnificent growth, and to the left are the Gardens, into which there are two Terrace-walks; one from the great gate, and another, at a considerable elevation, from the suite of apartments which constitute the first floor. The View taken by Mr. Harding pictures the more ancient portion of the venerable edifice—the north wing; with which the south wing mainly corresponds. They are, however, connected by a centre, built by Inigo Jones; and this centre, which consists of a façade with Corinthian pilasters, is sadly out of keeping with the quaint gables, octagonal turrets, ornamental door-ways, carved cornices, projecting mullioned windows, and elaborated chimneys, which distinguish the earlier dwelling of the Cobhams. In front, this incongruity is sadly apparent; but examined from either of the sides it is not perceived. The additions made by Inigo Jones are injurious, because they impair the harmony of the building; although, considered apart, they are worthy of his high fame. The nature of the architecture and the singular contradiction it exhibits, cannot be better shown than by reference to this engraving of one of the projecting entrances, of stone, extending to the roof, by which the wings are backed—including one of the ancient latticed windows on either side. The structure thus assumes the form of a half H, the wings being terminated by octagonal towers; a sunken wall in front encloses a quadrangular Lawn, ornamented with vases and statues. The wings exhibit the dates—1582 and 1594—and retain all the characteristics of the later Tudor style; although, as we have intimated, it has been materially corrupted by the several alterations to which it has been, from time to time, subjected. The ordinary entrance to the house is through a vaulted Passage, "built in the form of a Gothic cloister by James Wyatt," which contains the arms of the Cobhams, with the date 1587. This passage leads to the grand Staircase, and the several apartments on the ground-floor. The first to which strangers are conducted is the Dining-hall; which contains an elaborately carved black and white marble Chimney-piece, having quaint and curious



figures and buildings; and a series of Portraits of rare excellence. The Music Room, one of the suite added to the ancient building, affords a brilliant contrast to the sombre and solid character of the dining-room. It contains but one picture—full-length Portraits of the Lords John and Bernard Stuart, sons of the Duke of Lennox—a chef-d'œuvre of Vandyke. The Chimney-piece is formed of the purest white marble, sculptured in bas-relief after Guido's Aurora, by the elder Westmacott, with fauns, life-size, as supporters. The Ceiling was designed by Inigo Jones; it is divided into several square and circular compartments, with a deep oval in the centre, "superbly gilt and enriched by appropriate ornaments, among which are twelve pendent coronets." The apartment is in length 50 feet, in breadth 36 feet, and in height 32 feet; and although superbly ornamented and richly gilt—the Pillars, of the composite order, being of white marble, and the lining of scagliola—the whole is in fine harmony with the grace and chasteness of the design. There are two Galleries, one of which contains an Organ. The Vestibule is a small chamber, decorated with valuable Vases of verde antique. The Library contains a series of Portraits of eminent literary men—Bolingbroke, Sidney, Shakspere, Swift, and others; none of them, however, advance strong claims to originality. On the walls of the great staircase are hung several large pictures, which may bear examination before the gallery is entered. The most remarkable is attributed to Domenichino.

The grand Staircase conducts, first to the Portrait Gallery, and next to the Picture Gallery. The walls of the former are hung with portraits, among which are many of exceeding interest, including those of heroes, statesmen, kings and queens, church-reformers, and poets, mingled without regard to date or order.* The Picture Gallery is the great "show-room" of the house. It is a noble apartment, the walls of which are covered with works of art, of rare value and unsurpassed excellence, the productions of nearly all the great masters of Italy; including admirable examples of Guido, Titian, Salvator, Rubens, Raphael, Spagnoletto, P. Veronese, Giorgione, N. Poussin, and Guercino. Every part of the venerable edifice contains, indeed, some object of interest. The rooms, and halls, and galleries are thronged with rare and beautiful works of



* At the end of this gallery are, branching to the right and left, the private apartments of the family; and in a room opening out of the west end of the Picture-gallery, Queen Elizabeth is reported to have slept when she honoured the Lord Cobham with a visit during her progress through Kent. In the centre of the ancient Ceiling are still preserved her Arms, with the date, 1599.

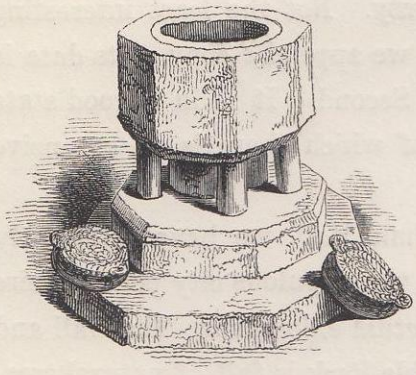
art; a series of perfect Vases from Herculaneum lie on the tables of the Picture Gallery; several antique Busts and Statues line the Hall; a magnificent Bath, of red Egyptian granite, is placed in the entrance-passage; and the furniture and interior decorations are all of corresponding excellence and beauty. Not the least interesting among relics of the olden time, is a Carriage, of which we append a copy. Its date is probably not more remote than the reign of Charles the Second. It is in a good state of preservation, and stands in one of the Out-offices, of which there is an extensive and remarkably commodious range.

Although necessarily limited in our description of Cobham Hall, we have sufficiently shown the rare treat a visit to it will afford to those who, "in populous city pent," desire to convert occasional holidays into contributions to intellectual enjoyment. The Hall and its contents will amply repay examination; and the noble Park is full of natural treasures—thronged with deer, singularly abundant in singing-birds, and containing trees, unsurpassed in magnificent size and graceful proportions. One of the walks conducts to a hillock, from the summit of which there is a splendid prospect of the adjacent country, commanding views of the Thames and Medway, and taking in the venerable castle, cathedral, and town, of Rochester; the dockyards at Sheerness; and the whole course of the great English river to its mouth at the Nore. The pedestrian, pursuing this route, will pass the Mausoleum, an elegant structure, built conformably with the Will of the third Earl of Darnley; and designed for the sepulture of his family. It was never consecrated: in consequence, it is said, of a dispute respecting "terms," and is now rapidly falling to decay. The basement story contains a vault and sarcophagus, surrounded by recesses for coffins. The Chapel is above. The exterior consists of four wings, with columns, sustaining sarcophagi, and surmounted by a pyramid.

But Cobham has other objects of interest—the venerable Church, and no less venerable "College." The church, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, stands upon elevated ground, at the entrance to the village. It consists of a nave, aisles, and chancel, with an embattled tower, entered by an antique porch. The Tower is obviously of a more recent date than the Chancel; the former is very ancient. As in many of the Kentish churches, the Walls were formerly painted in fresco, of which evidence may be easily obtained by those who will examine them narrowly; the steps of the altar are paved with encaustic tiles, of about the period of Edward III.—of various patterns, but most of them containing the fleur-de-lis; the Stalls, of old oak, appear to have been worm-eaten

for centuries. The whole aspect of the place indeed supplies indubitable proof of very remote antiquity *.

The modern "fittings up"—the painted pews—contrast strangely with the age of the structure. The Roof of huge oak rafters, the Gothic arches, the Brasses—broken or entire—which cover the floor, the quaint Monuments let into the walls, the delicately-sculptured Piscina, the Sedelia of carved stone, the singular Font, the rude Vestry-room with its massive oak Chest, the Scripture passages painted on the walls—all bespeak the antiquity of the building. But the most primitive portion of it is the Chancel, on either side of which are five latticed Windows, the south side being entirely, and the north side being partially, blocked up with rough stones. Nearly in the centre is the still beautiful Tomb of Sir Thomas Broke, the Lady Joan, and their ten sons and four daughters. It is of white marble; over which, upon a black slab, lie the effigies of the knight and dame. On either side, are those of five of their sons, kneeling, and wearing tabards, with their swords girded on. The figures of the four daughters are carved on the east and west ends of the superb monument. It bears the date 1561, under the arms of the Brokes quartered with those of the Cobhams. On the floor of the chancel are the famous "Cobham Brasses," the most perfect and the most numerous assemblage now existing in the kingdom. The series consists of thirteen, recording the memory of the Cobhams and Brokes, "Lords and Barons of this town of Cobham, with many of their kindred, who for many descents did flourish in honourable reputation." Of the thirteen, eight are in honour of the knights, and five are memorials of the dames. Of one of them we procured an engraving, in order to convey a somewhat accurate idea of the style and character of the series. It is to the



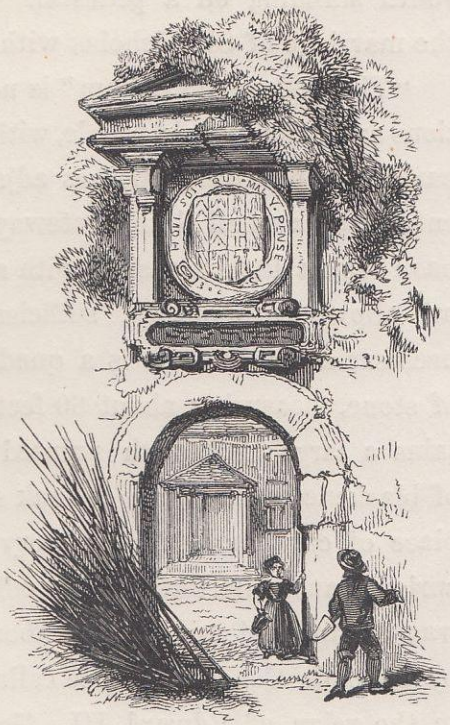
* An interesting series of Helmets hangs upon the walls of the chancel. They vary in age and appearance. The most interesting are two tilting helmets of the time of Henry V. These helmets were worn over the bassinet, which was also of steel, and fitted close to the head, having a movable visor which covered the face. The tilting or tournament helmet had nothing of the kind, an opening for the admission of light and air being formed by the projection of the lower portion, which covered the face, from the cap above. A few holes were drilled for sight, and the helmet rested upon the shoulders, being made wider at the neck, while the bassinet fitted it closely. The crest of the wearer, a plume of feathers, or other ornament, was generally affixed to these tournament helmets; and upon one of these at Cobham the staples remain upon the top and a hook behind, which helped to retain such decorations. A helmet thus ornamented with the crest of the Brokes—a Saracen's head—still remains upon the walls. It is, however, of a much later date, probably about the time of Henry VII., and is a war-helmet with a movable visor.

memory of Sir Nicholas Hawberk, the third husband of Joan Lady Cobham; the carving, in this example, is very elaborate and refined. The knight is represented with folded hands under a canopy, "habited in plate armour, standing on a lion, with a sword and dagger dependent from a rich girdle, and has on a skull-cap, with a hauberk of mail." The summit of the canopy is divided into three compartments, highly enriched with finials and pinnacles, and exhibiting the Trinity in the centre, and at the sides the Virgin and Child, and St. George killing the Dragon. At the feet of the knight is a youth standing on a pedestal. An inscription round the verge of the slab records the marriage of Sir Nicholas with Joan de Cobham *.

"The College of Cobham" is now only a collection of alms-houses, to which presentations are made—of old people, without restriction to either sex—as vacancies occur, by the parish and ten other parishes adjacent. It lies immediately south of the church, and is entered by a small Gothic gateway. Its occupants are twenty aged men and women, who have each a little mansion, with a neat garden and an allowance monthly, sufficient to secure the necessaries of life. It is a quadrangular building, of stone, measuring about 60 feet by 50; and contains a large Hall, with painted windows, a roof of blackened rafters, an old oak screen, and a fireplace of cut stone. The history of the college is curious and interesting. A college or chauntry was originally founded here, about the year 1362, by John de Cobham, thence called "the Founder," in the reign of Edward III. Towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth it was rebuilt, as appears by a record—"finished in September,

* The other Brasses require a brief notice. The earliest is to the memory of John de Cobham, the first Knight Banneret, and Constable of Rochester; he is dressed in a shirt of mail: round his waist is a rich girdle sustaining a long sword. Eight lines of Norman French are inscribed round the verge of the slab. 2. Maude de Cobham, wife to Reynold, Baron Cobham, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in the reign of Edward the Third: she is standing on a dog. 3. Another Maude de Cobham—probably the wife of Thomas de Cobham, who died in the reign of Richard the Second. 4. Margaret de Cobham, wife of John Lord Cobham, the founder of the College. The inscription round the verge informs us, she was daughter to the Earl of Devonshire. 5. John de Cobham, the founder of the College, standing on a lion under a canopy. In his hands he holds a church. 6. Thomas de Cobham. 7. Joan de Cobham, "probably the daughter of John Lord Beauchamp, and mother of the Founder." 8. Sir John Broke, and Lady Margaret his wife, under a rich canopy with pendants and other ornaments, with triangular compartments, "containing circles with shields, one of which bears the crown of thorns, and the other the five wounds; between the pinnacles, in the centre, is a curious representation of the Trinity, in which the Deity is delineated with a triple crown, and the Holy Spirit has a human face. The figure of the knight is gone, but that of his lady remains; and beneath, are groups of eight sons and ten daughters." 9. Sir Reginald Braybroke, the second husband of Joan Lady Cobham. 10. Sir Nicholas Hawberk, her third husband. 11. Joan de Cobham: she died, as appears from the inscription, "on the day of St. Hilary the Bishop, A.D. 1433." At her feet are six sons and four daughters, and surrounding her are six escutcheons of the Cobham arms and alliances. 12. Sir Thomas Broke, and one of his three wives. Below them are seven sons and five daughters. Sir Thomas died in 1529. 13. Sir Ralph, or Rauf de Cobham, represented by a bust, in a skull-cap and shirt of mail. He died, according to the inscription, on the 20th January 1402.

1598"—inscribed over the south portal, under the arms and alliances of the Brokes Lords Cobham. The endowments of the old foundation were ample; and were, with the college itself, bestowed by Henry VIII. at the Dissolution, upon George Lord Cobham, who had the "King's roiall assent and licence by hys Grace's word, without any manner of letters patent, or other writings, to purchase and receyve to his heires for ever, of the late Master and Bretheren, of the colledge or chauntry of Cobham, in the countie of Kent, now being utterly dissolved, the scite of the same colledge or chauntry, and al and singular their heridaments and possessions, as well temporall as ecclesiasticall, wheresoever they lay, or were, within the realm of England." The walls of the ancient college may be clearly traced, and a small portion still endures, comparatively uninjured. It is a Gateway, surmounted by the arms of the Cobhams, luxuriantly overgrown with ivy, forming a fine example of picturesque antiquity. The present structure was erected pursuant to the will of Sir William Broke, Lord Cobham, who devised "all those edifices, ruined buildings, soil and ground, with the appurtenances which sometime belonged to the late suppressed college," for the use of the "new" college. By an act of the 39th of Elizabeth the wardens of Rochester Bridge, for the time being, were made a body corporate, and declared to be perpetual presidents of the new college, the government of which they retain to this day.



The dependent village of Cobham is one of the neatest and most pleasant of the many fair villages of Kent.

Although in the course of our work we shall picture many nobler and more perfect examples of the domestic architecture of "Old" England than is supplied by Cobham Hall, we shall be enabled to call attention to few that afford so rich a recompense at so small a cost:—taking into account its genuine remains of antiquity, the magnificent works of art that decorate its walls, its easy access from the Metropolis, and the primitive character and surpassing beauty of the locality in which it is situated.

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